¢ FEBRUARY 27, 1950

# New Republic

## ELMER DAVIS: OBJECTIONS TO WORLD GOVERNMENT

## A REMEDY FOR SMEAR BY CONGRESS

By RICHARD H. PAUL & PHILIP MANDEL

## ELECTORAL COLLEGE REFORM:

AN EDITORIAL

## HAROLD L. ICKES:

ACHESON ON HIS PEDESTAL

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New Republic



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## WASHINGTON WIRE

IN HIS HEART Truman probably hoped the British Labour Party would win. On the other hand, the US Treasury and the Federal Reserve Board favored the Conservatives; they thought they would be more amenable to resumption of sterling convertibility. Not for years has a foreign election attracted such attention. In a dim way America saw its own politics reflected. The identification of the US press with the Conservatives has been almost complete; the publishers' hearts bled as Conservatives struggled with their own unhappy "me-too" problem. The peculiarity is that Churchill, though conservative enough by British standards, actually favors social reforms that would crisp Wall Street's hair. An English Conservative frequently has notions that would make him suspect by the House Un-American Activities Committee. The scale of values across the Atlantic is still 20 years apart.

**It is well** to be blunt about the FEPC bill. Southern opponents will use every political device at their command to block it in the House, but the real obstacle is still a Senate filibuster. It is harder to keep an issue from direct vote in the House than in the Senate and we still think it will wriggle through there somehow. The Senate is another matter. The issue is bigger than the FEPC; it is whether the fine phrases incorporated in both 1948 party platforms can actually reach the floor of the two Houses of Congress for democratic disposal in the form of a bill. Speaking of the Senate, our guess is it can't.

**This week** starts the big fight to get the $3.1 billion ECA appropriation through Congress. It involves the whole question of America's world position. The isolationists and economizers will attack the fund. They are still blind to the slow, gradual deterioration of the global situation, which has reached the point already where almost anybody can see it is going to increase defense costs, raise foreign-aid expenditures and almost certainly require higher taxes before long.

The scare over the hydrogen bomb will probably aid ultimate passage of ECA, which is a good thing, since it would be folly to leave European allies in the lurch at this point. (The same kind of folly, however, now impels the US to allow the Formosa government-in-exile to drop American-made bombs on Chinese coolies in an effort to win their affection and support.)

Last week Winston Churchill deftly slipped into the vacuum created by Truman's refusal to give any world lead for peace when he ordered H-bomb construction. There has been mighty little leadership coming from the White House recently. A curiosity is that two members on the Atomic Energy Commission who favored making the hydrogen bomb (the other three, including Lilienthal, were opposed for the time being) urged Truman to couple his announcement with a new approach to Stalin. When Truman declined, the two (Strauss and Dean) appealed to Senator Brien McMahon. Ultimately McMahon made the speech the President should have made.

**Truman was not** speaking to Stalin last week but to Arthur Krock of the New York *Times*. He gave him an exclusive interview which enraged all the other Capital news-bureau chiefs. Later Truman lost his temper when reporters at his press conference expostulated against playing favorites.

We are sorry for this. Truman is under a great strain. Pouring his heart out to Krock, constant Fair Deal critic and identified with the Senator Byrd outlook, was like confiding to a representative of the old New York *Sun*. In the Krock interview Truman frankly admitted he should not have ended lend-lease so suddenly in 1945. He went to Potsdam to talk to Stalin, he comments, but all the latter would discuss was the end of lend-lease. It is hard, really, to think of any adequate comment on this tragic episode. Maybe history would

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have been different without it; maybe not.

Truman says he was brand-new at the White House; had no staff or advisers of his own; felt he was carrying out FDR's policies. Here is our guess of what happened. Truman found on his new desk a memo from somebody like Leo Crowley and/or Admiral Leahy: end lend-lease and save money. It was exactly the kind of memo they supplied FDR for years—the kind he smilingly tossed into the wastebasket—but Truman unfortunately took the recommendation at face value. It may have happened that way; it could have.

**Washington's** creepy-crawly atmosphere is suitable for witch-hunts and Republicans are doing their best, of course, to increase the hysteria. Two of them show some promise. Nevada's Senator Malone wants us all to feel jitters over Michael J. Lee, chief of the Commerce Department's Far Eastern Division, who, it turns out, was born in Harbin, China. He has been cleared by one Loyalty Board check. The other drive is by Wisconsin's Senator McCarthy, who has been touring the country declaring the State Department is full of "card-carrying Communists." The numbers of these alleged Communists vary inversely with the square of the distance; at his farthest point from Washington McCarthy said "57" (like pickles) but as he returned it was down to four, then one. The one in question —John Service—had been, like Lee, exonerated with a sort of apology, in an earlier hearing.

**Notes.** The Jackson Day dinner party here last week was a funny affair when you stop to think of the GOP charges of "socialism." These were plump, well-heeled "Socialists"! They drove up to the vast armory in sleek cars, and munched filet mignon for which they had each contributed a minimum of $100. Some lobbyists had taken whole tables. Whether the party of the "little man" can remain that under corrupting success, or whether adipose will gather round its paunch as it did the GOP's, remains to be seen. . . . Truman has always believed that if the coal crisis became sharp enough, federal seizure of the mines would bring the men back.

*Washington* T. R. B.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### The H-Bomb

SIR: Your editorial on the hydrogen bomb (the *NR*, February 13) is clear, sensible, and very badly needed. I hope it will have a wide circulation and get the attention it deserves.

ROBERT M. HUTCHINS, Chancellor,
*Chicago, Ill.* The University of Chicago

### Harold Ickes

SIR: Once again I want to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the *New Republic* for printing the regular weekly comments of Harold L. Ickes. He packs more news and vital facts into a two or three-minute article than most readers can get in as many hours elsewhere.

*Berkeley, Calif.* FRANCIS M. CAMPBELL

### Charity and Taxes

SIR: Mr. A. G. Mezerik's thoughtful analysis of "The Foundation Racket" (the *NR*, January 30), the misuse of tax exemption by charitable and educational institutions, is a useful contribution to the understanding of what has occurred in distorting our laws to accomplish a purpose which was clearly not envisioned when they were written. It is another evidence of the philosophy of the end justifying the means from which our contemporary world bears so many scars.

One important omission I would like to mention, *viz.*, many of these businesses which are bought by organizations enjoying tax exemption, are sold with the sole view of bailing out individual—and usually controlling—stockholders who have been unwilling to declare their profits as dividends and pay the high personal income taxes thereon. To avoid such levies they sell their businesses to Foundations. Such people . . . usually continue to control and manage these enterprises for predetermined rates of compensation, get their money out immediately or in installments, and pay only the 25-percent capital-gains tax on the difference between their original cost (investment) and the price at which the sale was made.

This difference usually represents an important percentage of the total value of the business. In other words, the loss to the government on such transactions is a double loss: (1) the loss of corporate income which would otherwise be taxable, as cited by Mr. Mezerik, and (2) the loss in taxation if the business did not find a convenient Foundation to take it over and, therefore, were forced to pay out more of its earnings or be taxed for improper accumulation of surplus.

The prices paid by the Foundation usually are much higher than any arm's-length purchaser would pay. If these businesses were offered to the usual investment-house channels or to entrepreneurs, the prices would undoubtedly be far lower, since the factor of risk would be greater. . . .

*New York City* SIDNEY H. SCHEUER

### Double Logic

SIR: In the *New Republic's* correspondence column of February 13, Mr. Bernard Sinsheimer took issue with your two main premises of the Truman Doctrine: that the doctrine is dead, and that it was bad.

I am in agreement with Mr. Sinsheimer that the Truman Doctrine is not dead. But his reasoning concerning why he thinks the doctrine is not bad, although logical from his reference point, is entirely illogical if the situation is reduced to its basic elements.

Mr. Sinsheimer maintains that our policy in China is correct because he believes that the pro-Communist people of China are in the majority, and that our policy in supporting reaction in Greece is correct because the anti-Communists are the majority in Greece.

Now let's analyze the situation, considering the basic elements. The logic can be developed in a few simple steps:

¶ Remembering back a good many years, we will recall that when the Communist Party in China first began its revolution, it was very much in a minority, just as the Communists in Greece and Turkey are today.

¶ When the Communists began the revolution in China, our policy became that of supporting the reactionary Nationalist Government and supplying it with arms and supplies, just as we are supplying the reactionary forces in Greece and Turkey with arms and supplies today.

¶ The reactionary government in China failed and the Communists, to whom we were opposed by policy, were victorious; therefore, we can conclude that our adopted policy was a failure since it failed to secure the results desired. . . .

How is it possible . . . to conclude that the same policy, when applied to the same situation, can be good in the case of Greece when it is a proved failure in China?

*Austin, Tex.* CHESTER GUERRY JR.

### Rosa Luxemburg

SIR: I am preparing a paper on the life of Rosa Luxemburg, German post-World War I revolutionary.

I shall be grateful to those of your readers who will send me the titles of books, periodicals, letters, documents, *et al.*, that refer to Mrs. Luxemburg. All subject matter sent to me will be returned promptly. My address is 566 Bristol Street, Brooklyn 12, New York.

*Brooklyn, N. Y.* MURRAY POLNER

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VOLUME 122, NUMBER 9, ISSUE 1839, NEW YORK CITY, FEBRUARY 27, 1950 **New Republic**

# ELECTORAL COLLEGE REFORM

FOR THE FIRST TIME in 150 years, the United States is close to making a change in its method of electing a President. The Senate recently approved a Constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College and the "unit system" of counting electoral votes of the states and providing that in the future these votes shall be divided in accordance with the percentage of popular votes cast for each candidate. The House seems likely to give its approval to this amendment in the very near future. Conceivably, the 1952 election could be held under the new rules.

The bill passed by the Senate provides that:

¶ The Electoral College shall be abolished.

¶ The electoral votes of each state shall remain equal to the state's total number of Senators and Representatives.

¶ Presidential candidates shall receive a share of the electoral vote in each state proportionate to the popular vote each polls.

¶ The candidate receiving the most electoral votes shall be President, so long as he receives more than 40 percent of the total.

¶ If no candidate receives more than 40 percent, the joint House and Senate shall choose the President from the two receiving the highest vote.

Disagreement over what the practical results of the Lodge-Gossett formula would be have produced an alignment of forces for and against the measure remarkable even in present-day Washington. Senators Robert Taft (R, Ohio) and Harry Byrd (D, Va.), the staffs of the ADA and the CIO-PAC, and leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People are all opposed to the Lodge amendment. Liberals of both parties in the Senate—including ADA National Chairman Hubert Humphrey (D, Minn.), Frank Graham (D, N. C.), Paul Douglas (D, Ill.), Estes Kefauver (D, Tenn.) and Wayne Morse (R, Ore.)—led the fight for passage of the bill with White House support, and won it because all but three of the 26 Southern Democrats—Byrd and Robertson, of Virginia, and Thomas, of Oklahoma—joined with them.

Motives are mixed on both sides.

Senator Taft opposes the Lodge plan because: "In my opinion its adoption would be a serious blow to the hopes of the Republican Party to elect a President."

Senator Byrd is against it because he expects that, under the new system, minority and liberal elements, deprived of their balance-of-power position in what have previously been the "pivotal" states, would combine into an effective national force.

ADA National Director Charles La Follette, opposing the electoral change for opposite reasons, contends that: "Whereas there now is competition between the two major parties for liberal support, under the amendment the competition will be for the conservative Southern vote. This could set back the liberal cause a generation."

The CIO and the NAACP have both built their political organizations on the basis of the present electoral system. Their strength is concentrated in the states which control the bulk of the electoral vote at present. Naturally they resist a change that would wipe out their advantage as the "balance of power" in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois and California. The NAACP considers that "one of the chief purposes of the amendment is to destroy the present effectiveness of Negro voting districts in pivotal states."

The arguments of those who favor the Lodge-Gossett method of electing a President are even more divergent. Lodge, speaking for the Senate liberals generally, emphasizes that: "The amendment would make practically impossible a situation in which a candidate having a majority of the popular vote would fail to receive a majority of the electoral votes." A splinter party, under his plan, could no longer control the whole vote of a state by swinging its balance of power from one major party to the other.

Democratic sponsors point out that the new method would end the present system by which the winning candidate in each state is credited with all the votes, including those cast against him. It would make a President from Oregon or Massachusetts or Minnesota as politically feasible a selection as one from New York or Ohio. It would spread campaigning into all the 48 states and make the South a part of national politics.

Representative Gossett is selling the reform plan to his Southern colleagues on a very different basis. This, he has convinced most of them, is their Gossett-given chance to reëstablish their former power in Democratic Party councils. With minority groups reduced to their

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actual numerical strength at the polls, Southern Democrats tell themselves that they, and not the Negroes or the nationality or labor groups, will prevail in dictating the party platform.

The electoral value of Southern votes to the Democrats would be greatly increased under the Lodge-Gossett Plan *if* the traditional one-party pattern of the region were to remain unchanged. But, in fact, the split there is already deep and wide. Those who claim that the South again would dominate the Democratic Party because it would be the only section capable of producing a large majority of electoral votes under the new system leave out of account the fact that the 1948 vote for President in the 13 Southern states, tabulated by the Lodge formula, would have produced 77 electoral votes for the Republican and States' Rights tickets combined, as compared to 66.3 electoral votes for the Truman National Democratic ticket. While the entire bloc of 1948 States' Rights voters would certainly not move en masse into the Republican column in 1952, it is equally unrealistic to assume that, with Truman as its candidate, the National Democratic Party could bring those who followed Thurmond and Wright back into the fold by any campaign promises within the realm of reason. Even without the kind of Republican appeal that would now be made to the South, almost two million Southerners broke with all their upbringing to vote the Republican ticket in 1948. Another 1.16 million supported the Dixiecrats, leaving only 3.8 million of the fewer than seven million who voted in the 13-state region to support the Democratic Party in the "one-party" South. Almost 800,000 of this last group were Negroes. With no further liberalization of the laws, two million of the five million Negroes of voting age in these states should be qualified by 1952 at the present rate of increase.

The sands are shifting in the South, too. A Truman Democratic Party could not restore the "one-party," lily-white South regardless of what concessions it made. And to survive as a national party, the Democrats, in drafting their program, could scarcely disregard the wishes of the 16 million potential trade-union voters and the five million potential Negro voters outside the South.

**The Electoral College** system has been under attack almost since the Constitutional Convention of 1787 adjourned. Conceived as a substitute for direct election of the President, by men who distrusted popular government, the system became a real anachronism as soon as the first political parties were founded. It has never functioned as the framers of the Constitution intended, and its innumerable weaknesses under present conditions are well known.

Proposals for direct election of the President offered repeatedly in Congress for 150 years have usually failed, because the smaller states refused to sacrifice the advantages they now have in the two electoral votes allotted to all states regardless of size.

The strategy of the Thurmond "States Rights" Democrats in 1948 was based on another vital weakness in our present election system: the provision that the House, with each state delegation casting a single vote, shall select the President when no candidate receives a *majority* of the electoral votes. In the excitement following the surprise Truman victory, how close the Dixiecrats came to throwing the 1948 election into the House was generally overlooked. Had California and Ohio, which Truman carried by margins of only 18,000 and 7,000 votes respectively, gone for Dewey, Truman would not have received a majority in the Electoral College and might not be President today, despite having won a majority of the popular vote. Had the election been thrown into the House, the States' Rights Party, which won only 2.4 percent of the popular vote, would have held the balance of power.

**The importance** of plugging these two dangerous loopholes in the present electoral system before another national election is held overrides many legitimate criticisms which can be made of the pending Lodge-Gossett resolution. The overwhelming importance of making the South an integral part of our national political life offsets many of the short-run reasons offered by individuals and organizations for retaining the present system. Direct election of the President after a direct Presidential primary would be greatly preferable to the proportional counting of the electoral vote as proposed by Lodge and Gossett. But so drastic a reform is clearly out of the question. Even if three-fourths of the members of both Houses of Congress could be persuaded to agree to such a Constitutional amendment, three-fourths of the state legislatures would also have to concur—and one-third of our states fall into the "small-state" category which will permanently oppose such a loss of political power for themselves.

It is important to try to improve this pending amendment in two possible respects, however, before it is approved by the House. To make certain that the proportional allotment of electoral votes does not encourage the rise of a multiplicity of splinter parties, it would be well to limit the division of the state electoral votes to the two parties winning the largest total of votes in each state. To discourage further restrictions on the franchise in the "solid" states, until the necessary national legislation can be passed to assure a full electorate, it would be wise for the House to accept the amendment to the Gossett resolution which has been offered by Representative Clifford Case (R, N. J.): "Each state's electoral votes in any particular election would be reduced in the proportion that the number of persons actually voting is less than the total number of citizens

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of voting age in that state." Thus, states which arbitrarily limited their electorate would thereby limit their electoral power at the same time.

No one can foresee the precise outcome of the changes now being proposed in our method of electing a President. On the whole, the proposed new system would seem to give many more opportunities to the liberals than to the conservatives to build solid majorities in every part of the nation. The alliance between Southern "Democrats" and Republicans against the program of the Democratic Party has been the cancer in American politics since the turn of the century. If electoral reform makes it possible to split the Solid South along definite party lines, the end of this disease may be in sight.

# THE WEEK

## CIO TAX PLAN

The CIO last week presented before the House Ways and Means Committee an 11-point tax program which goes beyond President Truman's recommendations and is intended to revise the tax structure to "shift present burdens from low-income individuals to the wealthy and to high-profit corporations." Agreeing that the new tax bill should produce a net increase in revenue, the CIO differed from the President on the methods of raising revenues, emphasizing individual income taxes and "the establishment of levels of exemptions which permit the maintenance of a minimum standard of living for a family of four."

As one of the guiding principles of a sound tax and fiscal policy, Stanley Ruttenberg, CIO director of Research and Education, argued that "in periods of full employment and production federal revenue should be sufficiently high to balance the budget and retire part of the debt, without jeopardizing needed welfare expenditures for housing, education, social security, etc."

Itemizing the loopholes in our tax structure that should be closed, Ruttenberg mentioned: exemptions to life-insurance companies, special depletion allowances for oil, gas, metals and mineral companies, charitable trusts, capital gains, and tax exemptions on securities of state and federal governments.

The CIO offered an alternative to the Administration's plan to raise the corporate tax rate from 38 to 42 percent, to produce approximately $675 million in additional revenue annually. In recent years, corporations have been retaining a greater proportion of their net income after taxes than ever before, and the distribution of dividends has been at a lower proportionate rate than in prewar years and considerably below the rate of distribution in the twenties. The CIO proposes a top corporate tax rate of 55 percent, to be graduated downward in reverse ratio to the percentage of earnings distributed in dividends.

Congress is not likely to effect such a comprehensive revision of the tax structure this year. But at least the CIO has detailed a program that could serve as a goal for the next several years.

## THE RUSSO-CHINESE TREATY

The announced terms of the new treaty between Russia and China sound fair and reasonable on the surface. The new Chinese Communist government is to get back Port Arthur, Dairen and the Changchun railroad, either in 1952 or when a treaty with Japan is signed, whichever comes sooner. China is to have a loan equal to $60 million (US money) every year for five years. The independence of the Mongolian Republic is guaranteed. China gets, without payment, property seized by Russia from Japanese owners in Manchuria.

Naturally, the announcement of the treaty has been received with howls of derision throughout the Western world. It is said everywhere that there must be secret clauses giving Russia important concessions at China's disadvantage. Some of the terms of such secret clauses are actually described by people who are completely vague about the sources of their information—if they have any sources. Others, like Dean Acheson, say that Russia's word is no good anyhow; that she has broken 39 out of 40 recent treaties. It is argued that Russia is still taking large quantities of food from Manchuria in spite of famine conditions in North China; and also, that she has already confiscated and removed much of the Japanese factory equipment in Manchuria. People ask darkly why such a simple treaty as this seems to be, took so long to negotiate. And finally, the fears expressed by Russia and China that Japan may be used as a spearhead for American imperialism in the Far East are ridiculed.

We do not know whether there are secret clauses to the treaty, and we strongly doubt whether anyone else does, except those who negotiated its terms. We do know, however, that as of the moment, the USSR has scored an important propaganda victory. To the Chinese masses, the return of the railroad, Port Arthur and Dairen will seem an act of justice, and the $300 million loan, one of generosity. What is the West doing to offset this Russian victory? We are giving more money to Chiang Kai-shek, now stuck on Formosa; we are selling him military equipment at giveaway prices; and we are preparing to support, with money and guns, a puppet government in Indo-China which bears a striking resemblance in many ways to Chiang's moribund regime.

## BUNGLING IN BANGKOK

Nineteen top-flight American diplomats met last week in Bangkok and conferred on US policy toward Southeast Asia. While no official communiqué was issued, it is pretty clear what that policy is to be. It is singularly at variance with Secretary Acheson's famous National Press Club speech of a few weeks ago, in which he said we would try to bring democracy and prosperity to that part of the world, but would not use force there. On the contrary, we will give both money and arms to anybody in this part of the world who is willing, or says he is willing, to fight Communism. We have already recognized the French puppet, Bao Dai.

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This is exactly the policy that came to disastrous failure in China, a failure which was recognized by Secretary Acheson in his speech, even though since then he seems to have changed his mind—or had it changed for him.

Anybody can see that the situation in Southeast Asia is a headache to the West. Thailand is not going to fight Communist invaders, or anybody. She cannily refuses to recognize Bao Dai; so does India. The anti-Communist government of Burma is crumbling. India fears for the future of Nepal, and Tibet is grimly preparing for a Communist invasion. In Indo-China, the burden of the fighting is almost entirely on the 130,000 French troops.

The bitter truth is that on the question of democracy in Southeast Asia our British and French allies do not come into court with clean hands. Like the Dutch, who hung on savagely in Indonesia until they were forced out, the French in Indo-China, the British in Malaya, do not really want to give the natives economic freedom or democratic institutions; it is amazing how much, in this regard, the policy of a Socialist or semi-Socialist government in London or Paris resembles old-fashioned imperialism. The West makes concessions so slowly and grudgingly that they lose all moral effect and give a hollow sound to our propaganda about the horrors of Communism. With time enough, perhaps the West would bring democracy to the colonial peoples; but there isn't time enough. There isn't any time at all.

THE BIG PUSH

## CONFESSIONS OF DR. NOURSE

Latest member of the now-it-can-be-sold school established by Ray Moley and Jim Farley is Edwin G. Nourse, former chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers. The Moley-Farley brand of "exposé" was interesting largely because the authors were the kind of men who would kiss and tell. Nourse's tale, revealed to the public in "Why I Had to Step Aside" (*Collier's*, February 18, 1950), is thin and pallid in comparison. Here, it becomes obvious, is a man who has "told all" without ever having kissed.

From the day he was appointed back in mid-1946, the Brookings-bred Nourse set to work building himself a fireproof, bombproof ivory tower. One wall of this tower was the idea that the Council should not urge specific government programs upon the President but merely marshal pros and cons. The second was his thesis that "professional economics" should lead inevitably to certain "objective" conclusions. Fair Deal economics, it followed, was nonprofessional and unobjective. The third was his pet theory that the royal road to prosperity was to persuade enlightened business (how, he never fully explained) to pass on the fruits of productivity by a steady process of reducing prices. Finally, he proposed that Council members should not appear before the Joint Congressional Committee on the Economic Report.

With Dr. Nourse's departure, fortunately, these shams and rationalizations are being shattered. The Council is now beginning to carry out its mandate under the Employment Act of 1946 and trying to reach the President's target of a $300 billion national economy. The Council has abandoned the view that any one side in our pluralistic democracy has a monopoly on economic wisdom. In its latest public report to President Truman, it abandoned the illusion of an ever falling price level and oriented itself toward the goal of fairly stable prices with the gains of productivity being passed on through higher wages. The Council is also beginning to work closely with the Joint Congressional Committee.

## OUTSIDE AMERICA

**Great Britain** is the only country that was given separate national representation on the board of the new International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. All the other countries were given representation as parts of continental groupings. Moreover, the board of the new organization, intended to counteract the Communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions, was heavily weighted with British Commonwealth members.

On the surface this seemed a victory for the British Trades Union Council and for its parallel organizations in other parts of the Commonwealth, and to some degree it was. But the constitution of the new federation told a somewhat different story. Into this document it was the Americans who wrote their ideas. The British views were submerged. More important, the European ones were for the most part left out altogether, despite the fact that it is in Western Europe that the present struggle against the Communist labor organizations is most intense. The labor correspondent of the Manchester *Guardian* pointed out that the constitution "may make the ghosts of the First and Second Internationals stir unhappily in some European memories because there is not much Socialism about it. . . . It makes no pretense of being based on the political principles of social democracy."

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The reason for the American dominance in constitution-making and the British in board-making was plain. Some 15 million American workers were represented by the delegates who came from the United States, about eight million British workers by the TUC delegates. The French delegates could speak for only about one million workers, the Italians for even fewer.

Thus when Walter Reuther triumphantly hailed the new organization as offering "the workers of the world" a path other than an either/or choice between "Stalin and Standard Oil," he was really speaking to a relatively small minority of organized labor in Western Europe; he was not directly addressing the bulk of the workers for whom the choice between what Stalin and Standard Oil symbolize seems immediate and urgent—the many millions of members of the French CGT, the Italian CGIL and the other Western European labor organizations not represented at London.

The fact is that large numbers of these workers, including many who are not (or not yet) Communists, do see a choice only between Stalin and Standard Oil, despite Reuther. And when William Green said that he never had had any desire to mix in the internal affairs of other countries, and never would have such a desire, these workers could not but listen approvingly to the comment of the Communists that the AFL chief was merely echoing the hypocritical language of Wall Street and the State Department.

To Western Europeans, who have not entirely given up the political principles of social democracy, Green's language sounded suspiciously like an effort to justify the present State Department policy in Germany. If that policy is not doing the work of what is symbolized by "Standard Oil," appearances are deceiving.

**Thanks to Washington,** Western Germany is back in what used to be known as the concert of the nations; the bilateral pact between Bonn and Washington—Bonn's first international political agreement—put it there.

Germans are talking quietly and in a language that Western officials seem to consider most reasonable. There is Adenauer himself talking in Vatican City to the men of the Papal Secretariat of State responsible for the policy of a clerical, rightist Western Europe. There is Bonn's Foreign Trade Minister von Maltzahn in Paris, following in the footsteps of Finance Minister Erhard, getting along beautifully with French reactionary bankers and businessmen. There are Herman Abs and Wilhelm Vocke making an "excellent impression" in Wall Street. There are Walter Schwede and a delegation from German Big Steel in London's Lombard Street.

And some of these "good" Germans —good in Washington's eyes, which blink at the connection between National Socialism and international capitalism—do not even have to travel to be heard, or to listen. A large group of them assembled not long ago in Düsseldorf to welcome Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick, the permanent head of the British Foreign Office, as pro-German a Briton as his one-time predecessor Lord Vansittart was (at one time) anti-German.

The rightist Paris newspaper *Le Monde* said of the London conference that created the new labor "international":

> Never before has the divorce between historic reality and the leftist line of conduct been more crudely apparent. The American leaders were not to blame . . . they still feed on the benefits of Standard Oil and are not threatened by Stalin. The situation of their European colleagues is the exact opposite. . . . Unless they quickly change their perspective and method . . . Standard Oil will feed on them and Stalinism destroy what is left of them. . . .

From the French Left viewpoint, the lack of realism of US labor's stand, as set forth in London, stems from its failure to recognize that American policy in Germany—and in Western Europe—is in effect as pro-Standard Oil as it is anti-Stalin. The Germany that is to be "integrated" into Europe is reactionary, and the Europe into which it is to be "integrated" is equally reactionary.

Americans who fear a revival of German nationalism may be encouraged by the fact that present State Department policy seems to be as much pro-French as it is pro-German. Frenchmen of the Left are deeply discouraged by this very fact, because the France that America is sponsoring is precisely the one the Frenchmen of the Left are trying to protect themselves against. It is the France that, through André Siegfried in the rightist *Le Figaro*, can write glowingly about the "pure Cartesian" reasoning behind Taylorism—the made-in-America doctrine of the labor speedup. It is the France of the Comité des Forges, of the Wendel family.

**The fear** on the French Left is that the great American labor leaders are (knowingly or not) offering world labor "a third choice" which makes the American people furnish the money by which American bankers stake the French reactionaries in a rightist, anti-social-democratic Franco-German collaboration. There is nothing fanciful or hysterical about this fear. *Le Monde* says that the German banker Vocke's visit to New York "must be considered as the logical sequel of Adenauer's declarations about the 'cession' to France or French interests of a 40-percent quota of the Ruhr industries. . . . The Germans are now trying to work out a political-financial combination [with France] under the auspices of the solidest money in the world, the dollar, which will permit them to 'integrate' themselves as quickly and as completely as possible in the Western community."

The tragic irony of American labor's support for the made-in-America Franco-German "collaboration" is that it puts the same Americans who most bitterly objected to the State Department's Vichy policy in the years between 1940 and 1943 into the position of supporting a Bonn policy in 1950 that is Vichy's "logical sequel." A large portion of American labor and of American liberalism rejected the State Department's stand ten years ago that military expediency in the war of survival against Adolf Hitler justified a *political* deal with French reaction. Now there seems to be a section of American labor and liberalism that accepts the present State Department stand that pre-military expedience in the struggle against Stalin justifies an *economic* deal with the German nationalists and their French reactionary collaborators. Perhaps the "political principles of social democracy" are being left out of more than the constitution of the new "third choice" labor international. PERCY WINNER

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# OBJECTIONS TO WORLD GOVERNMENT

**by Elmer Davis**

THE GREATEST ASSET of the United Nations is its impotence. It was established in the hope, cherished by American statesmen and (with reservations) by British statesmen, that there were no insoluble conflicts of interest and purpose among the major powers. This hope turned out to be illusory; nevertheless, the United Nations has some value. It has materially aided in the solution of some minor political disputes which did not affect the vital interests of the great powers; its subsidiary organs have afforded an opportunity for exchange of views on non-political problems (if any problems are non-political in a world divided between freedom and totalitarianism); its secretariat has been able to encourage, even if feebly, what used to be called "League-mindedness"; and its General Assembly provides a soapbox from which everybody can blow off steam. Much, perhaps most, of what is said there is propaganda; but it may be doubted if it has ever corrupted anybody who was not open to corruption anyway. And as General Marshall has observed, so long as people are talking to each other they are not shooting at each other.

If the United Nations had seriously tried to solve the one great and dangerous problem of international relations, the antagonism between the Russian empire and the free world, the result would probably have been a world war. If the United Nations were replaced, before that antagonism has been resolved, by a world organization with paramount authority and the power to enforce it, the result would be either global civil war or global tyranny.

Yet many high-minded and intelligent people insist that we must have something stronger than the United Nations. Their proposals run all the way from strengthening the present organization to the establishment of a full-fledged world government, with such authority in its field over the individual citizens of its component nations as the United States Government has, in its field, over the individual citizens of its component states. Such a government, if the Russians and their satellites had a share in it, would be as open to subversion, and to the same kind of subversion, as was the government of the late Czechoslovak Republic. And no world government that could conceivably be safe for democracy could be established now, unless at the price of war. It may be that we shall eventually have to fight a war, though I am far from convinced of that; but there is no sense in asking for it.

Of course the advocates of world government do not see it that way. I have many friends among them—men and women of patriotism and good will, who see world government as the only hope of preventing war; a war that would be made more horrible by the reciprocal use of the plutonium bomb, with the still more appalling possibility of the hydrogen bomb in the background. (And don't forget biological warfare, which might prove worse than either.) Four and a half years ago, the first revulsion of the atomic scientists from their own achievement produced a well-intentioned but hysterical and illogical book entitled *One World or None.* Time has taught most people that the problem is not so simple; a document I have just been reading observes that "the prevention of atomic-age warfare is unquestionably a paramount problem." The language is well chosen; this is indeed a paramount problem. *The* paramount problem, however, is the preservation of the freedom of the mind, already in eclipse over large parts of the earth's surface. Unless that is our primary objective, whatever the preservation may cost, then George Orwell's *1984* is a preview of the history of the future.

**The document** quoted above is an outsize pamphlet called "Toward Consensus for World Law and Order," published by the sociology department of Duke University; after consultation with, though not necessarily with the concurrence of, several dozen American citizens interested in various formulas for reorganizing the world—a group running clear across the spectrum from Henry Luce to Henry Wallace. Here you will find the outlines of fourteen different programs, with a conscientious attempt at an objective summary of the arguments for and against each one—programs ranging all the way from total pacifism to preventive war. The present foreign policy of the United States is one of them; so is the foreign policy of the Progressive Party, which endorsed the foreign policy of the Soviet Union lock, stock and barrel in 1948; a couple of others would endeavor to add speed and force to the action of the United Nations in case of crisis—proposals that seem to me unrealistic, since every nation would do what its government conceived to be in its interest. Of the more sweeping programs no more than three or four need be taken seriously—perhaps, indeed, no more than two;

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*This is the second in a series of articles reporting on some aspects of American civilization at the twentieth century's halfway mark. The next in the series, by Dr. William H. Kilpatrick, will deal with education.*

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*After ten years on the staff of the Times, he leaped into fame at the beginning of World War II through his nightly five-minute broadcast for the Columbia Broadcasting System. Shortly after America entered the war, he became director of the Office of War Information. Since 1945 he has been a news commentator for the American Broadcasting System.*

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ince only two (Federal Union and the Culbertson plan) ecognize the one overshadowing international issue and ›ropose to deal with it by methods that might con-:eivably be both feasible and acceptable.

**At this point** I had better pause to thin out my audi-:nce. If you do not believe that the aggressive expan-sionism of Russia, an empire using a world religion as an instrument for softening up its intended victims, is the major problem in the world today; if you think that Stalin, when he talks to visiting Americans about the peaceful coexistence of the two systems, is saying what he means and not indulging in a tactical expedient; if you do not believe Stalin when, teaching *ex cathedra* on faith and morals, he says the exact opposite to his disciples—why, then you need read no farther. If the history of the past five years has not convinced you, I can't. To the remnant that remains, I may offer some comment on a few of these programs.

Besides the two mentioned above there are one or two others that deserve consideration because of the strength, or the character, of their support. Of these the best known is that of the United World Federalists. Nineteen Senators and 100 Representatives have supported its resolution declaring that it should be a fundamental objective of American foreign policy to seek the development of the United Nations into a world federation, open to all nations. How many of these gentlemen would actually vote for a constitutional amendment taking the United States into such a federation is another matter; a good many Congressmen, to oblige a pressure group, will come out for almost anything so long as they don't have to do anything about it. The UWF plan is sweeping enough—a world legislature in which representation would be determined according to the principles of justice (whatever they may turn out to be); a world judiciary to interpret the federal constitution and laws, with compulsory jurisdiction over individuals; and a world executive, controlling all weapons of mass destruction, with an armed force sufficient to lick any national forces.

There is logic in this, if nothing else; a government which does not possess sufficient power to execute its policies is not a government. But who would operate this world executive possessing all the atomic bombs? The proponents of this program are afraid that the Russians might not be willing to come into such a world government; as they were unwilling to accept the Baruch Plan for control of atomic energy, which would have been a long step toward it. In that case, say the World Federalists, let the rest of the world set up the government and remain armed until the Russians realize that they might as well climb aboard the bandwagon. But what I am afraid of is not that the Russians would not join, but that they would.

They might not, in view of the persistent stupidity of their foreign policy since the end of the war—a policy which obligingly provided a new provocation every time Congress was beginning to wonder if we weren't spending more money than was necessary on trying to stop them. But surely there must be somebody in the Kremlin bright enough to realize that a government with such powers, in which Russia, on the basis both of population and of industrial development, would be heavily represented in the executive as well as the legislative branch, would offer an opportunity to repeat on a global scale the performance so successfully put over in Prague in February, 1948.

**This insuperable objection** lies against all plans for genuine world government, so long as we have the present distribution of power. But mention might be made of the World Constitution emanating from a group at the University of Chicago; G. A. Borgese seems to have started it, Robert M. Hutchins and Mortimer Adler lend it the weight of their authority; and either its proponents or the Duke University social scientists who summarize their arguments say that it is not only based on justice (we are all for justice) but is the product of some of the best modern minds. Those minds are at least good enough to recognize that "the conceivable circumstances for the rise of a world republic are not now at hand"; but they say it is bound to come some day, whether without a war or after it, so they offer a draft constitution to get the argument started. As a constitution to be adopted now, without a war, it is open to the decisive objection given above. But after a war, which the democracies had won? Well, it is a little difficult to predict just what the state of the world, physical and emotional, would be after such a war, and what its various peoples would be prepared to accept.

Aside from the present distribution of power, and the dangers created by the Russian ideology—aside, that is, from the core of all contemporary international problems—the Duke University people summarize one of the arguments against world government as follows:

> In any particular stage of social development, laws are reduced to the fatuity of a Kellogg Pact or to the corruption of a Prohibition Amendment unless they have roots in a community of such social and political realities as usages, traditions, loyalties, habits, skills, moral and religious conceptions, and political and economic ideologies. Such roots for world government are as yet non-existent.

I could not hope to put it more clearly than that.

It is argued, of course, that the practice of federalism would lead to a growth in the habits of federalism, in a federal state of mind; as it did in this country. Exactly; as it did in this country where, 71 years after the federal union was established, there was a secession which had to be put down in a civil war; or for that matter as in

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Switzerland, where 500 years after the confederacy was established there was a secession which had to be put down in a civil war. Nobody would expect the creation now of a foolproof mechanism that would run for all the rest of human history; but why ask for trouble by proposing a mechanism whose successful operation would require large areas of agreement, when there do not now exist even such limited areas of agreement as would be needed to make the United Nations work?

**Ely Culbertson's plan,** which also has considerable Congressional support, is much more modest; instead of trying to solve all problems it concentrates on the central one. Its essence is the quota-force plan; of all the military power in the world, however much or little it might be, 20 percent should be assigned to the United States, 20 percent to the British Commonwealth, 20 percent to Russia, 10 percent to France, 10 percent to China; and the remaining 20 percent should be an international army recruited from the small nations, and at the disposal of the UN Security Council. The Council would be reorganized on the same percentage basis—two for each of the three major powers (the British Commonwealth counted as a unit), one for each of the two middle powers, and two representing all the small nations; and in questions of aggression or preparation for aggression—that is, arming over the quota or refusal to submit to inspection—the Council would operate without the veto.

When the quota-force plan was first announced in 1945, it seemed to me much the least unrealistic of any programs of the sort. At that time we heard much about the Russians' concern for their own security. The quota-force plan, if it could be carried out and faithfully observed, would—or would have then—relieved any of the three major powers from fear of unjustified aggression. Such a power, if unjustly attacked, could count on the support at least of the Security Council; whose 20 percent of the world's armed forces, added to the 20 percent possessed by the attacked power itself, would probably be sufficient for any defensive action.

Even in 1945 there was a question whether France, or China, or above all the small nations, would consent to reduced representation in the Security Council, unless such consent had been enforced by a threat of dissolving the United Nations and organizing something else. Then and now, any French government which consented to such a step down from the position which most Frenchmen believe their nation still occupies would be instantly turned out of office. Now, if we had the quotas, China's 10 percent would have to be added to Russia's 20. And other things than that have changed since 1945.

Culbertson, like other planners, would start without Russia if necessary, leaving the door open for eventual Russian membership. But since 1945 it has become evident that the Russians are much less concerned (if they are concerned at all) with their own security than with promoting the insecurity of others; and they are unwilling to consent to any effective inspection of atomic development. In those circumstances it would seem unsafe to readjust the free world's armaments on any but the present proportion, which is based on our superior ability to pay for arming not only ourselves but others. Culbertson's idea is far from the only one that looked good in 1945, but has been superseded by what has happened since.

There remains Federal Union, which, for the present at least, means federal union of the Atlantic democracies, the British dominions and the Philippines. Clarence Streit, who first proposed it in 1938, is one of the few men who have had the good fortune to see what once looked like a visionary notion made more and more plausible by each year of passing history. He would have the democracies form a federation inside the United Nations; but any other nation could join provided it would agree to give up the necessary portions of its sovereignty to the federation, and to maintain civil liberties. (What does that mean? Those liberties are "guaranteed" in the Constitution of the Soviet Union. If Russia joined, would Streit use force to make it live up to its Bill of Rights?) The Federal Parliament would control foreign policy and the armed forces; there would be a common citizenship, a common currency and, as soon as possible, a common federal economy.

The great merit of this plan is that it proposes to start—and if necessary to stop—with the nations that are already most alike and are already practising a considerable degree of military and economic coöperation. To go from that to a genuine federation may seem a short step. But is it? With all respect for the authority of the former high officials of the United States Government who are supporting this proposal, I have my doubts.

**When the** Marshall Plan was first proposed, the London *Observer* sketched the way it might, and should, be carried out—a program which would have come close to creating a Western European economy. Steel mills, for instance, should be located where they would best serve the common interest—not a national strategic interest or a private economic interest. Nothing like that has been done, or even talked about; even Paul Hoffman's endeavors to get a very moderate increase in economic coöperation out of the institution that calls itself the Organization for European Economic Coöperation have not got very far. One reason they have not got very far is that the British seem unable, or unwilling, to adjust their responsibilities to the Commonwealth with their responsibilities to Europe; which is one rea-

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son, but only one, for the political impotence to date of the Council for Europe, in spite of its active support by such personalities as Winston Churchill and Paul-Henri Spaak.

One of the nations Streit would include is Eire, which declines political or military coöperation with anybody unless it can engulf Ulster; other nations might have their indispensable preconditions too. And do not think all the objections would come from Europe. A customs union with Europe which competes with many of our manufacturers, a union with British dominions which competes with many of our farmers, would raise roars of protest all over the country. Common citizenship, with its implication of the right of free movement, would make hash of our immigration laws; every European who could get on shipboard would be coming over here. One does not need to be an admirer of Senator McCarran to feel that some restrictions on immigration are essential to our national interest; and every other country would be likely to feel that Federal Union prevented it from doing something equally essential to its interest.

The so-called parallel of the 13 original states is cited in support of almost every scheme for world reorganization. It is far more applicable to the Streit plan than to any other; but there remain considerable differences. The 13 states had a common language for all public business; they had a common background of political institutions, political traditions and political thinking; and from the time of their foundation they had had a common allegiance. They increasingly disliked that allegiance and eventually threw it off; still, they had all been used to looking in one direction, which made it a little easier when they all began to look toward Washington instead of Westminster. Federal Union would have no such running start.

These objections might not be insuperable if the choice were between federal union and total noncoöperation. But most of these nations are already coöperating in the fields of their most vital interests. It could be wished that they were doing more of it, but an attempt to unite them in a federation would raise so many new problems, and might entail so many new international animosities, that we might get less effective coöperation than we have now.

**A world government** would have to be a coalition government, in which the Russians and their acolytes (now including the rulers of China) would have a large share. There is no reason to suppose they would behave differently in a world government from the way Communists have behaved in every national coalition government, or for that matter in every labor-union coalition government. Every such government has eventually been faced with a choice between throwing them out and letting them take over. To throw them out of a world government would be difficult and dangerous; it would mean a world civil war, with the odds heavily against the democracies. It seems simpler, and safer, to keep them out in the first place.

But, say the world-government advocates, consider the frightful alternative—atomic war. It would be frightful, but I am not persuaded that it is the necessary alternative; either/or thinking is seldom applicable to the complexities of politics. By a vigorous and intelligent political policy, reinforced by the maintenance of powerful armaments, we may be able to convince the Russians that they cannot get what they want without war, and that they could not possibly win a war; so eventually they might decide to settle down with what they have.

**This policy** is open to objections too. It offers no hope for the liberation of the peoples now enslaved by the Kremlin—unless the Russian empire should fall apart from its own internal contradictions, which is possible but not at all probable. Also, this policy would take a long time and would cost a great deal of money. But it would cost far less than a war. As for the time, no one can say how long it might take; decades, I should think, rather than centuries; but a long time on the individual life-scale, and a time in which we could never afford to relax our vigilance, and would probably be unable to relax our tension. We shall all have to get used to living in the kind of world we don't like much —living in it, and working hard to keep it from becoming the kind of world we should not like at all. But that is not without precedent. When the Ice Age was coming on, it did no good to pretend that the glaciers weren't there, or that this weather was very unusual; you had to get used to living with the conditions that actually existed.

Such a life (we are getting a taste of it already, and it is likely to become less comfortable and more expensive) would with all its drawbacks be better than an atomic war. Unfortunately, we cannot be sure it would prevent war, though it looks to me like the best prospect for so doing. And if war came? Well, there is only one thing worse than atomic war and that is the loss of freedom—the total loss of freedom, of the body and of the mind, that you get in a totalitarian police state.

We know all about the evils of nationalism; and there are many. But when a nation has lost its freedom, it may hope some day to recover it; at worst, some of its more fortunate citizens can get out to regions that are still free. If the whole world loses its freedom, whence comes salvation? Some day, no doubt, we shall have world government; but it will have to be a different kind of world—either far better than the world we live in, or far worse.

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# A REMEDY FOR SMEAR-BY-CONGRESS

**by Richard H. Paul & Philip Mandel**

THE CONGRESSIONAL smear, as a tactic of demagoguery, has become so widely used in the last fifteen years that it now seriously threatens our civil liberties. Since it made the big-time on the American scene under the auspices of Martin Dies and his Un-American Activities Committee, it has developed into a standardized technique: the Congressman makes publicly an official statement derogatory to the victim, knowing that it is false or that he cannot support it. The charge is usually one calculated to inflame the emotions of the public.

The tactic pays off its practitioner in three ways: it gives him publicity, it discredits his opponents, and it makes the Congressman a man to be feared.

In his smear-work the irresponsible Congressman has all the advantages. The ordinary victim is completely helpless. Howard Hughes managed to strike back at Senator Brewster, and to inflict more damage than he suffered. But Hughes had the assets of wealth and fame, of high-priced lawyers and public-relations advisers. Reporters attended his press conferences and publicized his counterattack. Less spectacular victims lack these advantages. Even an eminent scientist like Dr. Edward U. Condon was limited to a dogged defensive.

But perhaps the greatest advantage a smearing Congressman has is his Congressional privilege. A newspaper which states, without foundation, that a man is a Communist, has printed what the law regards as a libel, and may be called upon to pay both compensatory and punitive damages. A Representative may make the same unjustified statement upon the floor of the House without fear of being bothered by anything but his conscience. No libel suit will be filed against him. He is protected, even though his statement be admittedly malicious and admittedly untrue. And publications and radio stations which accurately report his remarks are likewise protected under the law.

This doctrine of legislative immunity was not promulgated originally to protect the legislature from the people, but from another branch of government—the Crown. The first statute emerged out of the struggle of the English Parliament to be free from arrest and attainder for criticizing Charles I. Thus the statute was passed to guarantee Parliament's freedom of speech—actually its freedom of radicalism. Directly traceable to this statute is our own constitutional provision which is the cornerstone of legislative immunity in the US. Today unscrupulous legislators use this immunity to destroy free speech and to practise the smear in safety.

The present strength of the doctrine of legislative immunity is not due solely to its age. It rests on the reasonable assumption that legislators are most effective when unhampered by fears of monetary loss and by the demands of defending litigations arising out of their expressions of opinion. We must assume, the argument runs, that legislators will be fair and responsible, and in so far as any individuals suffer from isolated failures of such fairness, or from the honest mistakes of legislators, such suffering is a necessary price of the larger social process. In a democracy, legislators must have the right to speak freely and without fear.

**But modern conditions** have magnified the power of Congressional defamation to do harm and have made it impossible to dismiss lightly its consequences to individuals. A hundred years ago legislative voices carried but a short way beyond the walls of the Capitol. Pillory by publicity today is nationwide; a man cannot live down a bad name given to him in the national press by moving to another town. Because of the tension of our time, the victim of a Congressional smear finds himself hated by millions whom he has never seen and who previously had never heard of him.

It is therefore important to recognize that the necessity for the Congressman to be immune does not require that the citizen be forced to suffer without remedy. The government can pay the price. This could be accomplished by making the government liable, under the present laws of libel and slander, for defamations committed by Congressmen in the course of their official activities.

Such a law would parallel the development of governmental liability to suit upon contracts and torts. Originally the sovereign could not be sued upon any ground whatsoever: "the king can do no wrong." Later it was recognized that this was unfair, and governments, "as an act of grace," consented to be sued upon contracts. More recently, both here and in England, statutes have been passed permitting tort suits against the government. This extension of governmental liability is based upon the sound premise that where the conduct of governmental business involves a loss to a citizen (as when a mail-truck driver inexcusably wrecks your picket fence), that loss should be borne as a cost of government; that the whole people, not the damaged individual, should bear the cost. The application of this doctrine to Congressional defamation is clear. It is surprising that it has not previously been suggested.

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The remedy would be for Congress to pass an Act permitting an injured party to sue the United States Government for defamatory statements for which, if it were not for Congressional immunity, he could obtain redress at law. Thus, suit could be brought because of a statement made by a Representative on the floor of the House or a statement in a committee report. Such suit would be brought in the United States Court of Claims. The government would be defended by the Department of Justice. The Congressman's freedom from harassment would be preserved by a provision protecting him from being called as a witness by either side; his interest in defending his utterances would be protected by a provision empowering him to participate in the defense if he so desired.

Such an Act would provide a remedy without the necessity of creating any new libel law. There is plenty of that already. The federal courts decide libel cases constantly, and an old Supreme Court definition of libel—"an utterance tending to impugn the honesty, virtue or reputation, or publish the natural or alleged defects of a person, and thereby expose him to public hate, contempt or ridicule" (Dorr v. United States)—is as useful a definition today as when it was written. The government could avail itself of the usual defenses, such as truth and fair comment. The only standard defense that could not be pleaded would be legislative immunity.

Most dangerous statements today involve Communism, but there are other kinds of Congressional defamation such as Representative John E. Rankin's description of Walter Winchell as a "slime-mongering kike." The libel may even be accidental, as in the case of the Army captain whose name was mistakenly included by a House military subcommittee in a list of 16 officers who had been given commissions despite Communist backgrounds. The captain in that instance would have a claim for damages under the proposed Act.

The most direct and obvious advantage of such an Act would be the financial reparation made to the individual libeled. An unjust charge of Communist leanings can cause a person great financial harm, and the total value of jobs and job opportunities lost, legal fees incurred, and mental suffering caused, can often be calculated, though roughly. In any event, the problem of estimating damages resulting from a Congressional libel is the same as is met in all other libel cases.

Of course, a sum of money can never completely compensate a person for a lost reputation, but the very fact of winning a judgment does help to restore his reputation. A successful plaintiff in a libel suit against the government could show a prospective employer the judgment vindicating him. Furthermore, although newspapers are notoriously reluctant to publicize successful libel actions, this area of sensitivity may not extend to libel actions against the government.

Another advantage is that the proposed Act could give redress to an injured party without impeding the operations of Congress or its members. Since Congressmen would not pay personal judgments, no fear of economic consequences would deter them from speaking their minds freely and fully. And since they could not be required to testify at the trials based upon their statements, their attention would not necessarily be distracted from legislative duties. We can assume that the office of a Congressman whose charge provoked a suit would coöperate with the Justice Department by supplying whatever evidence it had supporting the charge. This coöperation would, in fact, add little if any to the burdens of a Congressman's staff, for Congressmen generally either receive their information from government sources, to which the Justice Department could turn for independent verification, or they supply it, often unsolicited, to the Justice Department's FBI. In any event, they seldom base charges against individuals on their independent knowledge, so that their personal attendance at the trials would not be important to the outcome.

A Congressman would, of course, be embarrassed when twelve good men and true found that he had stated untruths. But we must assume that a responsible Congressman would prefer, nevertheless, to have an injustice corrected. As to those few who willfully promulgate libels, it is possible that the embarrassment of being proved wrong might supply the restraint now lacking.

**In perspective,** the proposed Act cannot be regarded as a cure-all. The remedy of litigation is sometimes unavailing to those without means, and at best it is hazardous. For courts do not always arrive at truth: sometimes proof of the truth cannot be obtained, and sometimes perjury prevails over honest evidence.

Yet the remedy of litigation is the best that society has devised in its long history, and it should be utilized to relieve the present helplessness of persons who have been defamed by Congressmen. The number of such victims is not too small for concern. No opportunity to enlarge the area of justice should be neglected on the ground that it is too small; true lovers of justice are those misers who treasure its every grain.

Moreover, the proposed Act would have a significance broader than the remedy it would afford the persons defamed. It could be used to expose Congressional smearers; but, more important, it would deter them.

By passing the Act here advocated, Congress would show its insistence, against the present drift of events, upon the fullest possible protection of the citizen in his relationships with government, and upon the fullest possible protection of his right to think and speak independently. The enactment of such a law might encourage our wisest voices to make themselves heard upon the issues which lie like land mines in the road ahead.

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# HAROLD L. ICKES: Acheson on His Pedestal

THE CONDESCENDING ATTITUDE of Secretary of State Acheson toward those who do not agree that he should do the exclusive thinking for the people on foreign affairs has become well-nigh insupportable.

On February 9 he chided Senators Tydings of Maryland and McMahon of Connecticut. They were good little boys who might be entitled to be seen but not heard. Tydings had offended by advocating universal disarmament. In the Senate, McMahon had spoken for a crusade for peace and suggested a worldwide Marshall Plan of $50 billion to be spent over five years. This sum was to represent savings on our armaments expenditures.

Aside from these Senators, a number of other Congressmen, in addition to editors, columnists, church groups and eminent engineers, including Dr. Einstein, had urged a new look at our armaments race with the Soviet Union, now that the making of a hydrogen bomb was next on the bill of fare. Across the Atlantic, Anthony Eden and Sir Hartley Shawcross, the British Attorney General, called for a new effort to end this suicidal rivalry. But apparently it is the idea of our Secretary of State that not only is he to be our exclusive thinker on foreign affairs; his pronouncements are to have the unquestioned authority of one from General MacArthur himself. Moreover, having made up our minds for us, they must stay made up. Are editors or scientists or able columnists, such as Walter Lippmann, to say nothing of Senators and Representatives, to question an immaculately conceived idea of the Secretary of State? If anyone else is so naïve as to have a notion on the H-bomb or peace, he should keep it to himself. His Excellency must never be affronted by the unregenerate suggestion that new circumstances may raise a question as to a past decision.

**Arrogance is not** a becoming attribute, least of all in a man who is a public servant. The people have the right to be heard on the subject of foreign affairs. Unhappily, Mr. Acheson is not the only man who has ever functioned in the State Department who has seemed to think that foreign affairs are something esoteric, and thus beyond the comprehension of the uninitiated. The holy of holies of the devotees of a self-centered and mysterious cult must not be profaned by mere Senators, scientists and editors, whose sole function is humbly to receive with extravagancies of praise any edict that may be vouchsafed to them. "Theirs not to reason why, theirs but to do and die"—and pay, and pay, and pay with money and lives.

It may be profanation of a temple devoted to the immaculacy of the intellect to suggest it, but Mr. Acheson had better make up his mind that the people who are being assessed exorbitantly for atom bombs and H-bombs and other ever more terrifying instruments of destruction intend to find out whether at least some of their money so employed might not more profitably be devoted to peaceful enterprises, particularly in the backward portions of the world. The man who insists that radically new and unexpected conditions do not call for a reëxamination of a determination made after a consideration of less important, even if somewhat similar circumstances, raises a question as to his fitness to hold his office. Statements by Senator Connally and Assistant Secretary of State Hickerson indicate that the light is beginning to penetrate Mr. Acheson's personal iron curtain.

**Granted that** the Soviet government has broken faith over and over again; has exercised its veto power intemperately; has violated the principles of democracy that it pretends to honor; has worked unceasingly, day and night, to foment unrest and strife so that it may fish in troubled waters; has set about, regardless of the rights of other nations to self-determination, to corrupt or coerce political leaders in order to impose a political ideology that is hateful to every man of decent democratic instincts. Admitting the truth of all of these charges and more, yet no man can be certain, not even Secretary Acheson himself, that there may not be some loophole not yet plugged by the Soviets through which the way to peace might be achieved. If war should come, it would not be Secretary Acheson alone who would fall a victim to its lust and brutal cruelty. He and all of us have lives more precious than our own that it is our duty to save and protect from injury or possible death.

We must be relentless in our pursuit of peace. I repeat what I have said on other occasions: We have never yet approached universal disarmament and world peace with that unconquerable will with which, against tremendous odds, we and our allies struck down Mussolini, Hitler and Hirohito. Official defeatism must not be allowed to frustrate the people in their determination to accomplish peace.

The American people properly demand a crusade for peace that will be buttressed by international disarmament. They will persist in their determination until every possible avenue leading in its direction has been carefully explored. In this undertaking we should work closely with our friends and allies in the United Nations.

HAROLD L. ICKES

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# BOOKS IN REVIEW

## MAXIM GORKY: A SOVIET IDOL

**by Avrahm Yarmolinsky**

THE FIRST BOOK under review is the only notable Russian literary work to have been produced on American soil. *Mother* was written, in part, during the summer of 1906 on an estate in the Adirondacks, while Gorky was visiting the United States for the purpose of agitating against an American loan to the czarist government and collecting funds for the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Party. An English translation, a competent job, made by Thomas Seltzer from the manuscript, came out the following year in New York and London. It is this version, long out of print, that has now been reissued. It has been slightly retouched, somewhat to its detriment, by Isidor Schneider, who failed either to correct the few mistakes committed by the translator or to take account of the numerous changes made by Gorky in the text before including it in his collected works, which appeared in 1923.

MOTHER, by Maxim Gorky. With an introduction by Howard Fast (The Citadel Press; $2.50).

THE ARTAMONOV BUSINESS, by Maxim Gorky. Translated by Alec Brown (Pantheon Books; $1.25).

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MAXIM GORKY: My Childhood, In the World, My Universities. Translated by Isidor Schneider (The Citadel Press; $3.75).

In his short introduction Howard Fast says that when he first read *Mother* long ago, "it was tapestry after cotton and burlap, living, breathing people after cardboard cutouts," and that on rereading the novel recently he did not find it "in any way lessened." One can't help wondering what Fast's usual literary fare has been. The characters in *Mother*, if not "cardboard cutouts," are with equal certainty not "living, breathing people." This tale of the Russian revolutionary movement has all of the popular appeal that attaches to the literature of social protest. It was written to raise spirits dishcartened by the reaction that followed the upheaval of 1905-06, and it may well have achieved its purpose—Lenin welcomed it as "a timely book." But it is essentially a political tract in fictional disguise, with small claim to literary merit. Gorky himself put it down as a failure. Read in 1950, these declamatory, rather maudlin pages, though exuding an enthusiasm for freedom and social justice, are most effective as a reminder of the noble dreams and generous hopes that the Russion revolution has so cruelly betrayed.

**The Artamonov Business,** written when Gorky was on the far side of middle age, was the last long narrative he was able to complete. It is an account of the rise and fall of an industrial dynasty, presented as the epitome of the brief and inglorious history of capitalism on Russian soil. A dark tale of decadence, it ends with a scene of total collapse and offers only a dim glimmer of a new order. It is engaging enough at the start, but as the narrative unfolds it gets cluttered with incidents and crowded with characters difficult to keep apart, and it moves at a joltingly uneven pace. Yet it is superior both to Gorky's earlier novels and to the vast and tedious fictional chronicle that occupied him in his last decade and remained unfinished at his death. The clear-cut theme, the author's intimate knowledge of his material, the racy folk language, of which he was a master, the exuberance that informs certain passages—all this gives *The Artamonov Business* body and substance. The characters are conceived in dynamic terms, and at least one of them —the tough peasant who is the founder of the family fortune—is a fully realized figure. In spite of Gorky's socialist convictions, the pioneer malefactors of wealth (a particularly unlovely lot in Russia) had a strong attraction for him, and on more than one occasion he depicted these two-fisted, hard-working *builders* with zest and instinctive sympathy. The reason is not far to seek: central to his thinking was the belief, professed by Turgenev and Chekhov before him, that Russia's salvation lay in work—a naïve notion typical of nineteenth-century optimism.

*The Artamonov Business* gives the measure of Gorky's powers as a novelist. A writer in the naturalistic manner, he had thoroughly explored the base of the Russian social pyramid and he was capable of a firm grasp on character. His style was marred by a weakness for fanciful imagery, his invention was feeble, his sense of composition deficient, and he relied too much on doctrine. The short story—a medium he cultivated assiduously—suited his talents better than the longer narrative. A few of his stories and sketches, for example, "Birth of a Man," "Going Home," "Lullaby," though not impeccable, are wonderfully effective.

At their best, Gorky's short stories, like some of the memorable passages in his novels, give the impression of documentaries, plotless, factual, exact. They seem to be records of personal experience, their emotional impact inherent in the objective circumstances rather than due to any contrivance on the part of the author. George Moore once remarked that Turgenev's imagination was not creative but illuminating. This description fits Gorky as well. What his imagination illuminated was largely surfaces. Most of the time his gaze was turned outward. Leaning heavily on his prodigious memory, he discovered rather than invented his characters and the situations in which they found themselves. Hence the excellence of those of his writings in which, giving up all pretense at fiction, he abandoned himself to reminiscence. Indeed, the recollections of his childhood and youth, set down in middle age during the momentous decade that witnessed the First World War and the establishment of the Soviet regime, are his major work.

The *Autobiography* is humorless, unselective, growing rather tedious and murkier as it draws to its close. Less the

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story of Gorky's "education" than a book of characters written out of a wholesale curiosity about the men and women with whom fate had thrown him, it is far from an integrated work. Yet some of the people and the scenes are unforgettable, and few books give one such a sense of being plumped down among Russians and in the midst of the life in pre-revolutionary Russia; few convey so vividly the brutality and squalor, the coarseness and vigor, the light of human kindness shining fitfully in the darkness.

**Both** *The Artamonov Business* and the *Autobiography* are new translations of volumes long available in English. Alec Brown's work is an improvement upon the earlier version, but it is not free from mistranslations. Isidor Schneider informs us that in his rendering he has preferred "to be free rather than meticulously 'correct' where correctness might involve stiff 'translation English'." Indeed, though occasionally solecistic, he is never stiff and is frequently felicitous. And he is certainly free with the text: unrestrained by respect for Gorky's style, he omits, he adds, he transposes, he embroiders, he substitutes, he Bowdlerizes (slightly). His worst offense is that all too often he fails to grasp the meaning of the original, with disastrous results. One instance must suffice. There is a wonderful passage in which the Grandmother, herself destitute, distributes "secret alms" by leaving coppers outside the windows of her neighbors' hovels at night. Toward the end she says: "There's a Jewish woman living here; she must have nine children, all toddlers." This is rendered: "There's a Jewish woman here, must have ten servants." The Grandmother goes on: "I asked her: 'How do you live, Mosevna?'" The name is a patronymic, meaning "daughter of Moses," used by the folk instead of the given name. Schneider puts it: "I asked her: 'Do you live according to Moses' commandments?'" Some of the explanatory footnotes contain the crudest errors of fact.

When Gorky, repudiating his early hostility toward the Soviet regime, assumed the role of spokesman for the dictatorship that was trampling on the humane values he had defended, he became the object, and victim, of endless adulation. Since his enigmatic death this has assumed the character of a semi-official cult, dedicated to the proposition that he was a literary genius of the first order and an intellectual giant besides. Hasn't Stalin himself declared that "Death and the Maiden" (a youthful indiscretion Gorky had long and wisely kept hidden from the world) is "stronger than *Faust*"? The West has had no share in this cult and is not likely to be won over to it by the volumes under review. They are the work of an uneven writer with an ability to record his experiences, a great capacity for sympathy and a yearning for the good life, but one whose gifts, though genuine, were modest, and whose vision in the end was clouded.

*Avrahm Yarmolinsky, chief of the Slavonic Division of the New York Public Library, is the author of Dostoevsky, A Life; A Treasury of Russian Verse and The Heritage of European Literature.*

## MALRAUX'S MASTERPIECE

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ART, by André Malraux. Vol. I: Museum without Walls, 157 pages; 87 illustrations in color and gravure. Vol. II: The Creative Act, 224 pages; 136 illustrations in color and gravure (Bollingen Series XXIV [Pantheon Books]; $25).

IT IS NOT BY CHANCE that the best writers on art are, strictly speaking, neither art historians nor estheticians, but poets. The greatest painters are not highly gifted for writing; they paint. But those verbal artists with first-hand knowledge of the craft of painting are the critics we most value after we have learned the useful facts and have seen the great works. Fromentin was an interesting artist, as was Ruskin; Baudelaire sketched with brilliance; Malraux has made fascinating films; but primarily they are all artists in words, in ideas. In their writing about painting and sculpture they have made important elucidations and illuminations.

Malraux has been explorer, merchant (and discoverer) of unfamiliar art, Marxist, soldier, novelist, politician. What these two magnificent volumes show, perhaps not surprisingly, is that Malraux also, and even before everything, is a Christian. Incidentally, he may be a French Catholic; perhaps he does not practise his religion, but the depth in his optimism, his prophecy of hope, of possibility, depend upon the faith of one who, more familiar with the East than most of us, gives nevertheless pertinent reasons for an attachment to the liveliest traditions of the West. These traditions, whatever else they involved, were primarily Catholic —in the sense of that word when Rome still represented Occidental unity.

His *Psychology of Art* is written with almost monotonous brilliance. The elevation of diction, the shock and clarity of dialectic, the range of observation, reading, vision are on a level of such imaginative proliferation that it is exhausting to digest more than a few pages at a time. First of all, one must adjust one's concept of art history ("that fairy tale which history tells itself"). For most of us the distribution of world art is like those caricature maps of America as seen through local eyes, on which Manhattan is a suburb of Boston, and the Rocky Mountains skirt the Mississippi. Modern Art is our Boston; the Renaissance is a Mississippi, and beyond the Rockies lies some vague Orient. For Malraux, the story of world art is a chart of the globe across recorded time. Invoking the aid of museums, and of his "imaginary museum" (photographs and reproductions), he neither excludes nor distorts any fruitful area or epoch. He does not forget the lesser arts, nor does he accept those relics of nineteenth-century opinion which have, even in their partiality, remained both our esthetic premise and our historic truth. Malraux questions everything. To almost everything he offers novel and provocative answers. Some of his large questions are not answered; their mere formulation astonishes us more than many answers of the specialists. They remain unsolved in our minds, as perhaps in his, but give us fresh insights into works we have thought were long exhausted by being looked at too much.

**Malraux is** a descendant of Michelet (who fed Rimbaud his inspiring facts), and Stuart Gilbert's virtuoso translation gives the proper texture of discreet magnificence to his exposition, polemic and peroration. Malraux has ever been attached to the heroic; the very names of his novels—*La Route Royale, La Condition Humaine, L'Espoir, La Lutte avec l'Ange*—compose a kind of hymn

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to his principal preoccupation. As moralist, he is a passionate pleader for creative freedom; as historian, he is a surgical exposer of factual prejudice. He investigates the plastic arts as a connoisseur intimate with music and literature. Architecture alone seems to move him little. Being a humanist in a rather scholastic sense (which he clarifies with almost Pascalian humility), he gives his greatest pages to the French ecclesiastical Gothic, and to El Greco.

"Humanism does not consist in saying, 'No animal could have done what I have done'; but rather in declaring: 'I have refused to do what the beast within me wished to do, and have become a man without aid from the gods'."

If one stopped there, it might be easy to ask: why, if man can make art without aid, what is God's use? But earlier, Malraux writes, in speaking of the dreams of sick artists, "a believer's sickness points the way to God, an agnostic's to the absurd." And so, he concludes his study: "True, for a believer, this long debate of metamorphosis and rediscoveries is but an echo of one of the many voices of his God." Malraux, in a manner broader and more humane than Maritain's (finally, perhaps, even more intelligent), places the focus of art in the scheme of things. He is not one to imagine we can be saved by art alone, even by Christian art. What he does is to fix both the nature of the creative act and the function of the work of art. He distinguishes portrayal from creation, style from structure; shows how the data of an artist's life have less meaning than the sum of his art—a fact we tend to forget with the success of psychoanalysis and biographical fiction.

**These Swiss-made** books are expensive but well printed. The format is large, the illustrations perfectly chosen, spaced and produced. We can move in on great works—as in a film—from mosaic, to mural, to stained glass, and finally to the focal detail in the window. We can follow El Greco from Venice, through Rome, to Toledo, developing the same subject with increasing drama. And Malraux's gift for epithet is an anthologist's delight. His book is no formal history, but it is bound to have a tremendous formative appeal. LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

## DEMOCRACY INSPECTED

THE RAMPARTS WE GUARD, by R. M. MacIver (Macmillan; $3).

OF THAT small company of Americans who write political theory rather than report, as historians, the theories that other men have written, R. M. MacIver is perhaps the most distinguished and the most likely to endure. His *Web of Government* was a signal achievement. His new book is a sustained adventure into the meaning and implications of that tortured ideal, democracy.

MacIver conceives the essence of democracy to be the right of the people constitutionally to make and to unmake government, with no deprivation of civil rights for those who oppose its policies. Democracy does not mean equality in all things; there is no merit in equality of wretchedness or equality of serfdom. But democracy does require equality of citizenship, so that no man may be permanently master of another, and equality of opportunity. Liberty is crucial—not the absolute liberty of the individual to go his way, without regard to the welfare of others, but the liberty of the citizen, whose rights as a member of society are contingent upon his obligation to respect the rights of his fellow citizens. Economic liberties, for example, must be relative; for the concentration of economic power may create great inequalities of opportunity. Liberties of the mind, on the other hand, may in a real sense be absolute; "for only here is it true that the liberties of some are not intrinsically hampered by the liberties . . . of others."

Reason and experience commend, but do not ensure, democracy. It is endangered today by internal forces and by the threat of Soviet expansion. MacIver does not minimize the hazards of Communism; he notes the falseness of "Soviet democracy" and the misrepresentations of Communist propagandists who never argue with us but seek to smother us with assertions. However, he rightly emphasizes the greater dangers at home: from unemployment and insecurity; from men reluctant to surrender their prejudices, traditions and interests to the demands of democracy; from loyalty oaths, which repudiate the first tenet of democracy—that no doctrine warrants suppression merely because it is strongly disapproved; from

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un-American "Committees on un-American Activities," which seek to protect us from dangers emerging not from the presence of Communism but from the fear of Communism, which is nothing else than the distrust of democracy.

This is a wise and thought-provoking book. It deserves to be widely read, particularly by those who profess an affection for democracy but know not what it means. DAVID SPITZ

*David Spitz, author of Patterns of Anti-Democratic Thought, is assistant professor of Political Science at Ohio State University.*


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## THEATRE: Change of Mood

SOMETHING is definitely changing in our theatre. Most of the current hits —"Lost in the Stars," "The Member of the Wedding," "The Cocktail Party" —are departures from what used to be regarded as surefire stuff. They are not the kind of plays easily adaptable to Hollywood use. They are the sort of thing that most Broadway backers reject as unsound and unsafe. Even less successful plays like "The Enchanted" now find a surprising number of partisans to give them a fighting chance.

This change was brought sharply to my attention by the fact that Samuel Taylor's dramatization of Robert Fontaine's novel, *The Happy Time*, is the exception to what has recently become the rule. It is conceived and constructed along conventional lines. And far more than the favorable press can indicate, there are quite a few theatregoers who positively resist such plays. I am not one of the latter, but I have observed people, in what amounts to a state of righteous indignation, protest the play's success—which makes me realize how things have changed from the time when, it seemed, such plays alone were expected to succeed.

The truth is that "The Happy Time" as a type of play represents the norm of the contemporary theatre. This is true not only of America but of Europe—for almost a hundred years. The success of a Shaw, a Chekhov, an O'Neill has always been exceptional. Delicate spirits need not bemoan the fact. The pleasant and facile are easier to take than the original, which always presents some difficulty.

"The Happy Time" is a moral—what used to be called a wholesome—family comedy with a special latter-day "freedom" about it. Peccadilloes of sex and drinking are smilingly tolerated, even extolled (particularly since the family is French-Canadian), which does not prevent the play from being sentimental. If one is willing to lend oneself a little, one will find it generally agreeable and frequently funny. It is well acted, and is staged by Robert Lewis with a certain amiably wicked cuteness that fits the material perfectly.

**"The Devil's Disciple"** began its recent career as part of the City Center series of dramatic revivals, and, because of its success there, is now embarking on an extended midtown engagement. The play is a trifle dull in its exposition, but when it reaches the court-martial scene, which introduces the delightful General Burgoyne, it becomes exuberantly Shavian and capital fun. Maurice Evans and Dennis King are both excellent; they know how to speak so that speech itself becomes one of the main sources of our pleasure.

Since Shaw is not a realistic playwright and his characters are chiefly theatrical foils, we usually overlook the fact that many of his plays are largely ideological autobiographies, colorful fables illustrating his convictions. This is certainly true of "The Devil's Disciple," in which Shaw's point is that the heterodox revolutionary (Shaw himself) is often a man of tender disposition and traditionally homely sentiments, while the officially and professionally virtuous (in this case a minister) may often prove fundamentally militant, hence basically un-Christian.

**It seems to me** somewhat sentimental, if not entirely irrelevant, to compare James's "The Turn of the Screw" with "The Innocents," the play William Archibald has based on it. "The Turn of the Screw" represents a phase of James's work in which a preternatural psychological tension is converted into a spooky stylization halfway between reality and nightmare. The distinguishing quality of these James stories is their oblique revelation of the author's horror at his own lacks—particularly as related to sex.

There is little of this quality in "The Innocents," which is much more conventionally a ghost story. It begins interestingly enough, particularly when it suggests that the two children feel quite at home with the ghosts, who terrify the adults. The play deteriorates as it progresses, and ends with unconvincing and maudlin moralism (to which is added a touch of lame psychoanalytics) when the little boy dies in his effort to

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throw off his burden of obsessing evil. There is hardly any substance to the anecdote.

"The Innocents" is well produced, with a handsome and extremely well-lit setting by Jo Mielziner—an example of a setting that is a major factor in a play's success. Peter Glenville's direction is meticulous in the British style, which does not always serve the actors well, though the cast (Beatrice Straight, Isobel Elsom, Iris Mann and David Cole) is gifted.

British direction tends toward a certain technical, chiefly elocutionary, precision which, with English actors, makes for an arresting effect of stage vibrancy, resembling the "grand manner"; but the best thing about American actors—particularly of the younger generation—is their sincerity or inner truthfulness. When the British directorial style is applied to young Americans, a peculiar artificiality and feeling of forced dramatics creep in, and they are a little disturbing. The performers seem then to be able amateurs, doing a good job which does not quite convince.

HAROLD CLURMAN

## MOVIES: The Big Money

WHATEVER MOTIVES impelled Roberto Rossellini to make "Stromboli" (and despite the knowing leers, I suspect they were largely monetary), he has done himself artistic damage from which he will not easily recover. The legions of decency may now cease their self-righteous bullying—the worst punishment that can befall the director and his star is that the public should judge the picture they have made.

"Stromboli" is a cynical potboiler, and a failure even at that level. Only second-raters understand the manufacture of marketable trash; when a man who has standards deliberately throws them aside, he exhibits a pathetic imitation of meretricious showmanship.

What experienced hack, for instance, would think of concocting a vehicle to show off the accomplishments of Miss Bergman? She lacks the personality and technical skill for solo work and must be protected by a strong supporting cast and a feverishly eventful story. But in "Stromboli" the secondary players are so recessive that they seem almost literally out of focus, and the story—a worldly girl marries a primitive fisherman to escape from a DP camp and subsequently becomes the victim of his community's suspicions and her own frustrations—is a fabrication devoid of novelty and unrolled with repetitious predictability. Miss Bergman is at the mercy of the observer's complete attention.

She is an actress who does nothing by intuition (recall that Rossellini works extemporaneously), who carries out with a literal heaviness the business that has been explained to her. If you watch her closely—and in "Stromboli" you are forced to do so—it is apparent that she does not attempt to create a character; she displays a repertory of dramatic-school clichés. Miss Bergman "runs to and fro," she "starts with alarm," she


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"gathers herself together for a supreme effort," she "hears the voice of God." Miss Bergman is especially renowned for her ability to "hear the voice of God." She can also, on command, dissolve into heaving sobs, assume a brave but rather vacant smile and gaze off into space in a manner suggestive of a clipper-ship figurehead. Finally, she radiates an involuntary wholesomeness that sometimes clashes awkwardly with the part she is presumed to be playing, but which is undoubtedly the key to her popularity.

It is ungallant, perhaps, to rip into Miss Bergman this way, but these are the considerations that should have convinced Rossellini of her unsuitability to his style of picture—a style that gains its effects from immediacy, a perfect authenticity of character and precise emotional teamwork. What he did, of course, was abandon his own manner and, backed by the distribution facilities of RKO, attempt to break into the mass market.

Rossellini has disowned the picture, announcing that RKO has cut from it the theme of religious regeneration that gave the work its meaning. But the criticism of "Stromboli" rests not on what is omitted (though some narrative point *would* have been an advantage), but on what is included. If it had been a good picture, unscrupulously edited, we would be impressed—if baffled—by what we saw. "Stromboli" displays a unity of wooden banality.

**It might be supposed** that when a psychoanalyst finds himself seriously disturbed he will turn to a colleague for treatment, but according to Noel Coward's "The Astonished Heart" that is not the case. His is the sad tale of a great healer who, having reached the dangerous age and fallen for a hussy, can find rest for his tortured superego only by jumping off a roof.

If Coward were still at the top of his form, the fragility of his story would be no matter (who bothered to analyze "Private Lives"?). Coward, however, has grown tired; he has lost his magnetism and now relies entirely on his mannerisms. And suddenly it becomes apparent that what he is aping is the quintessence, not of a gentleman, but of a gentleman's gentleman. His gestures are not debonair, they are servile; his slightly bowed shoulders and elegant hands suggest a man who is serving cocktails rather than one who is consuming them. So the complete impression made by "The Astonished Heart" is of a man who neither looks nor behaves like what he is.

Coward is supported by three able women—Celia Johnson, Margaret Leighton and Joyce Carey—in the roles, respectively, of wife, mistress and secretary. There are flashes of witty dialogue; there are love scenes so painfully stilted that they can scarcely be watched.

ROBERT HATCH

## ON THE AIR: The Distaff Side

As AN ACT of gallantry, and because that is the way the news has broken, this week's column is dedicated to the ladies, starting off with two who are still very young. Anne Whitfield, 11, and Janine Roose, 12, are at present appearing as the Phil Harris-Alice Faye children on NBC's Sunday-at-7:30 radio program starring the bandleader and his real-life wife. With their mothers, the girls recently traveled from Hollywood to New York, where for two weeks the network tried hard to boost the show's stock by introducing the principals at a series of midtown publicity parties.

The majority of professional listeners have never been able to accept Harris' stumblebum characterization as a substitute for comedy, but we let ourselves be wooed. Drinks were consumed in proximity not only to Harris and family, but to Bob Hope, Robert Montgomery, Dave Garroway and Henry Morgan; lunch was eaten with Anne and Janine and their mothers. Then I listened to the program again and it still sounded foolish. The youngsters may have talent, but it will never emerge in the Harris-Faye ménage. All you can say at present is that, under the guidance of very sensible parents, they show loads of charm, intelligence and a wholesomeness apparently unaffected by Hollywood's reputed mores. Have their mothers heard perhaps of television?

**By far the most** graceful personality appearing on both radio and television today is Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, a fact that was once again evident when "The Author Meets the Critics" (ABC-TV, Thursdays at nine; rebroadcast over


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ABC-radio a week later, Thursdays at ten) placed *This I Remember* under discussion. Moderator John K. M. McCaffrey announced that, out of respect to Mrs. Roosevelt and to the President of whom she writes, program procedure would be altered somewhat: "We didn't think of getting Westbrook Pegler here to provide critical comments, if that's the right phrase." Instead, there was talk about the book and its hero by Henry Morgenthau Jr., Samuel I. Rosenman, Elliott Roosevelt and Virgilia Peterson.

I am on record as saying that television performs no service when it merely focuses cameras on a radio show, but "The Author Meets the Critics" has begun to break me down. A few months ago, when this program showed Robert Frost reading his poetry, I began to retract; now I'm against the wall. Seeing Mrs. Roosevelt and her guests ad-libbing about FDR gave me something that blind radio could never provide. However, it takes Frost or Mrs. Roosevelt to beat me down, and I still believe that television should think up its own ideas.

A few days after her appearance on the book show, Mrs. Roosevelt introduced her new Sunday-at-four television program on NBC. Again there was "only" talk, but what talk! Mrs. Roosevelt had as guests that afternoon a large group including David Lilienthal, Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, Senator Brien McMahon, Dr. Hans Bethe and Albert Einstein (the latter having recorded a film reel at his Princeton home especially for this program). The subject was atomic energy and the hydrogen bomb, and for importance of subject and quality of discussion it was the year's No. 1 broadcast. Only Mrs. Roosevelt could have carried off the responsibilities of "master of ceremony" with the warmth and calm thoughtfulness she maintained in this grim context.

**The only** commercial program Norman Corwin ever wrote was "Ann Rutledge." It was a radio show (for "Cavalcade of America," back in 1940) and took 24 minutes of air time. Early this month, "Philco Playhouse," which NBC televises for a full hour Sundays at nine, announced "Ann Rutledge" as a Corwin piece commemorating Lincoln's Birthday. I was eager to see what I expected to be Corwin's first television drama on the air, and interested to discover how he would expand a 24-minute radio production to more than twice that amount of time on television.

The answer was unexpected. Corwin's contribution consisted of his name (the sponsors insisted on that) and a dozen lines or so of dialogue. The play was an original, by Joseph Liss. Probably the busiest dramatist on TV this season, Liss's opportunities for original writing are rare; most often, he is held down to adaptations, like that of Christopher La Farge's *The Sudden Guest*, which he had to fit to the home screen a week earlier. On this occasion, however, he got his chance, and he used it well. Grace Kelly, who played the title role, and Stephen Courtleigh as the young Lincoln, were entirely credible. "Ann Rutledge" was not only a fitting tribute to the martyred President, it was also a commentary on what TV might receive from its better writers.

**Just to finish with** the distaff aggregation, this column must congratulate Dorothy Parker, Judy Holliday and Stella Holt on the new enemy they have made. Fulton Lewis Jr., having polished off the coöperative movement, heavy water and Henry Wallace, recently turned to a listeners' organization called the Voice of Freedom Committee. For several nights on his Mutual network hatecast, he "exposed" the committee as "dangerous" and "diabolical." Mrs. Parker as chairman of the group, Miss Holliday as one of a number of prominent sponsors, and Miss Holt as executive secretary bore the brunt of his indignation.

It was difficult to understand what Lewis detested about the committee's work, which has been to enroll the services of about 3,000 monitors interested in raising "the cultural and educational content of radio." But then Lewis is not easy to understand anyway. As *Life* noted in a recent editorial: "We wouldn't like to share responsibility for his radio existence."

SAUL CARSON

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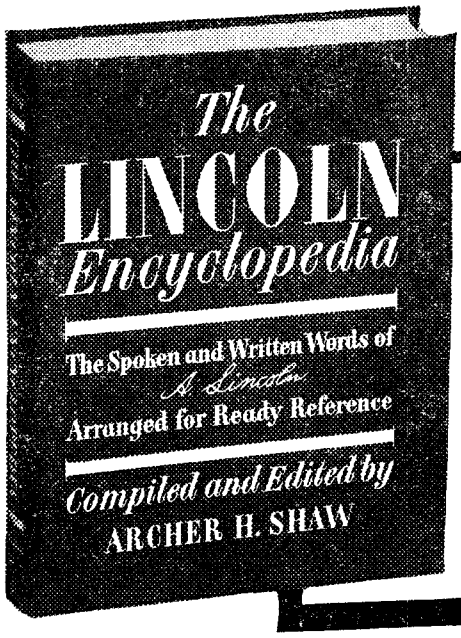


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